



## South Dakota Department of the Military South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



# IMPROVEMENTS AT SOLDIERS AND SAILORS

During the last month, new windows have been installed in the Soldiers and Sailors Building in Pierre. The last window to be replaced is the arched window in the rotunda. Blinds have also been replaced, so we've gone from the 1950 look to a 2020 look!!!!!!

In addition all of our military branch flags and the service organization flags have been hung in the rotunda and we have added lighting to the large America and State Flag.

At the base of the broken column is a POW/MIA table setting.

We encourage you stop in when you're in Pierre and take a look at the changes. Program Manager Oliva would love to buy you a cup of coffee!!



### ***Inside this issue:***

Honoring Native American Heritage	2
Zimmerman Visits MJF Sculptor	3
Project 22	3
Wreaths Across America	4
VABHHCS EIS	4
Veterans Council Legislative Round Tables	5
Springfield Veterans Memorial Dedication	6
Upcoming Events	7



## HONORING NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE

Message from Secretary Zimmerman —

Traditionally, October and November have been two months that South Dakota celebrates and honors Native American Heritage.

During that time we have many opportunities to celebrate their rich and diverse cultures, traditions, and histories and to acknowledge the important contributions, achievements and sacrifices of Native people.

Native Americans have served our Nation, and theirs, in uniform with loyalty, patriotism, honor, courage, and sacrifice—for more than two centuries, in every war fought by the United States. The United States Department of Veterans Affairs reports that there are over 178,000 Native American Veterans.

South Dakota is fortunate to have seven tribal veterans service officers. I am grateful to have the opportunity to meet with these leaders at least quarterly and to hear first-hand about the unique challenges that Native American Veterans face.

In August I had the honor to recognize Standing Rock Sioux Tribal Veterans Service Officer Manaja Hill for his leadership. Hill was presented the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans Service Officer of the year award for his outreach and his ability to network with partners and find resolutions to enhance the lives of their veterans.

Our Department, along with the South Dakota National Guard, created a traveling exhibit honoring South Dakota's Code Talkers. The exhibit has been in Pierre and Watertown and will be in Sioux Falls October 28 and at Crazy Horse on November 11.

Code talkers played a pivotal role in the successful U.S. efforts throughout the wars. It is important that we honor and highlight the memories of what they accomplished and ensure this history is not forgotten. Their code saved lives and gave the military a way to secretly convey its battle plans on America's way to victory.

I have had the distinct honor to be part of the Code Talker Memorial Planning Committee. This committee has been working on the design and funding of a permanent memorial in Pierre.

Let us keep the flame of their dreams alive—let us preserve the cultures and traditions in this land of the free and home of the brave. God bless those who serve and have served in uniform, and God bless this wonderful country of ours.

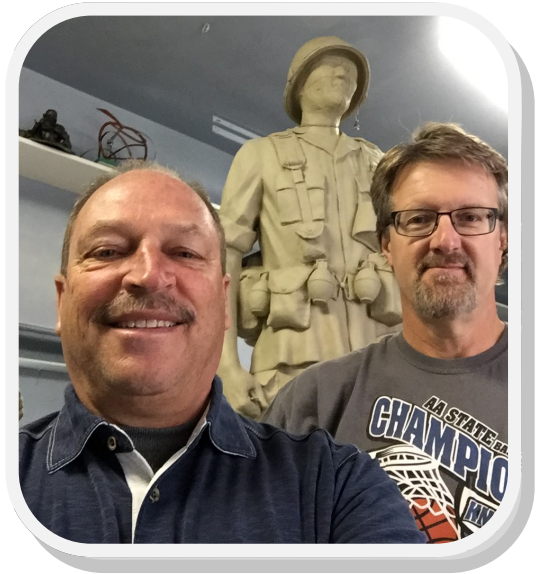




## ZIMMERMAN VISITS SCULPTOR WOLFF

SDDVA Secretary Zimmerman takes “selfie” while visiting sculptor Darwin Wolff.

Wolff is working on the life-size bronze sculpture of Michael J. Fitzmaurice that will be located near the main entrance of the new Michael J. Fitzmaurice Veterans Home.



## PROJECT 22

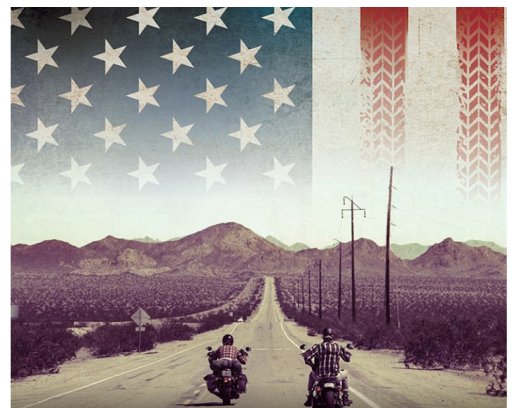
Project 22 is a documentary made by two veterans riding cross country to raise awareness of PTSD and is named for the fact that 22 veterans a day commit suicide.

Project 22 was a 22 day, 6,500 mile motorcycle awareness campaign from San Francisco to New York City to raise awareness of the high rate of suicides within the veteran community. As Daniel Egbert and Doc King traveled across the country, they spoke with many veterans who had contemplated or attempted suicide and asked them to share their stories; what led them to it and what brought them out of it.

At 22 suicides a day, that's 154 per week, 660 a month and over 8,000 a year, their goal is to prevent the taking of one's life.

LEATHERNECKS MC is hosting a screening of the film on November 12<sup>th</sup>, at Century Theatre, 2400 S. Carolyn Ave, Sioux Falls, at 1930 (7:30 PM). Tickets are \$10 each and are being sold on line at: <https://www.tugg.com/events/70157> Click on and reserve your ticket(s) now. There is an excellent film trailer to view at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fC2TsHnmomM> It is only 5 minutes in length.

### PROJECT 22



## WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA PIERRE CEREMONY



The South Dakota Funeral Directors, in conjunction with the Wreaths Across America project, will be conducting their annual Wreath Laying Ceremony in Pierre on Monday, December 7, at 11:00.

The ceremony will be held at the Flaming Fountain Veterans Memorial on Capital Lake

## VABHHCS ANNOUNCES AVAILABILITY OF DRAFT EIS FOR RECONFIGURATION OF VABHHCS

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announces the availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Reconfiguration of the VA Black Hills Health Care System (BHHCS). The Draft EIS analyzes the potential impacts of six alternatives for changes to VA's facilities in Hot Springs and Rapid City, South Dakota, to support proposed services reconfiguration.

The VA BHHCS Reconfiguration Draft EIS is available for viewing on the VA BHHCS website [www.blackhills.va.gov/vablackhillsfuture/](http://www.blackhills.va.gov/vablackhillsfuture/) and at the Hot Springs, Rapid City Downtown, Sturgis, Chadron, Alliance, Lied Scottsbluff, and Pierre (Rawlins Municipal) public libraries; as well as in Pine Ridge at the Oglala Lakota College Pine Ridge Center library on the high school campus. Information related to the EIS process is also available for viewing on the VA BHHCS website.

Written comments on the VA BHHCS Reconfiguration Draft EIS can be submitted through January 5, 2016, online through [www.blackhillseis.com](http://www.blackhillseis.com), by email to [vablackhillsfuture@va.gov](mailto:vablackhillsfuture@va.gov), or by regular mail to Staff Assistant to the Director, VA Black Hills Health Care System, 113 Comanche Road, Fort Meade, SD 57741. Refer to "BHHCS Reconfiguration Draft EIS" in any correspondence.

Environmental topics that are addressed in the Draft EIS include aesthetics, air quality, cultural resources and historic properties, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, wildlife and habitat, noise, land use, floodplains and wetlands, socioeconomics, community services, solid waste and hazardous materials, transportation and parking, utilities, and environmental justice. Best management practices and mitigation measures that could alleviate environmental effects have been considered and are included where relevant within the Draft EIS.

Interested parties are invited to participate in any of six public meetings summarizing the results of the Draft EIS. These meetings will be held in Rapid City, SD; Hot Springs, SD; Pine Ridge, SD; Chadron, NE; Alliance, NE; and Scottsbluff, NE. The dates, times, and locations for these meetings will be published on line at [www.blackhills.va.gov/vablackhillsfuture/](http://www.blackhills.va.gov/vablackhillsfuture/). At the public meetings, interested parties will also have the opportunity to comment regarding the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 process, which has been integrated into this NEPA process. Copies of the public meeting handouts will be available by the date of the first meeting at the VA BHHCS website.



## SOUTH DAKOTA VETERANS COUNCIL LEGISLATIVE ROUND TABLES



- **wednesday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, Sioux Falls, SD 11:30 A.M.**  
(DAV Headquarters, 1519 West 51<sup>st</sup> Street, Sioux Falls, SD)
- **Thursday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, Watertown, SD 1:00 P.M.**  
(American Legion Post Home, 1412 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW, Watertown, SD)
- **Saturday, November 21<sup>st</sup>, Rapid City, SD 10:00 A.M.**  
(VFW Post Home 1273 Home, 420 Main Street, Rapid City, SD)

Members of the State of South Dakota House of Representatives and Senators have been invited to hear issues of concern for our veterans and their families.

The 91<sup>st</sup> South Dakota Legislative Session begins on January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016 in Pierre.

Legislative Round Table Discussion Hosted by:

The American Legion



Disabled American Veterans



Veterans of Foreign Wars



Paralyzed Veterans of America



Vietnam Veterans of America



Military Order of the Purple Heart





# SPRINGFIELD DEDICATES VETERANS MEMORIAL



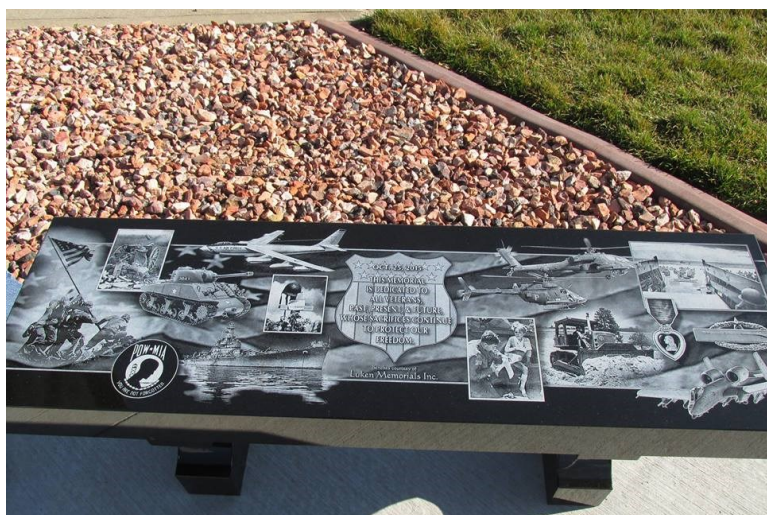
Last Sunday over 300 people gathered in Springfield for the dedication of the Veterans Memorial. The memorial, located in Terrace Park, overlooks the Missouri River and provides a picturesque back-ground.

The memorial features a single

spire with an adjoining granite wall that includes the names of just under 2,000 servicemen and women with ties to the Springfield area. Directly to the west are three flag poles—one for the American flag, the South Dakota state flag and the POW/MIA flag. A 70 mm Howitzer battalion gun from WWI is also included in the display.

Both SDDVA Secretary Larry Zimmerman and Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, SDNG adjutant general, addressed the

group and commended them for their success in creating this memorial.



# Upcoming Events

- Nov. 4—Boots to Business—Starting or Growing a Veteran-Owned Business—Pierre Post 8 American Legion (520 W. Pierre St) - 8:30 am—3:30 pm (CT)
- Nov. 7—Vietnam Veterans of America State Council Meeting—Pierre Post 8 American Legion—Noon (CT)
- Nov. 11- Code Talker Medal Exhibit—Crazy Horse Memorial
- Nov. 13—VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—Hot Springs—10:00 am
- Nov. 16-17—SD Veterans Commission Meeting—Redrossa—Pierre 1:00 pm (CT)
- Nov. 17—Women Veterans Honoring Ceremony—SRST Admin Bldg—Ft. Yates, ND 11:00 am
- Nov. 18—Veterans Council Leg. Round Table—Sioux Falls—(DAV —1519 W. 51st St) 11:30 am (CT)
- Nov. 19—Veterans Council Leg. Round Table—Watertown—(Amer. Leg. Post—1412 9th Ave. SW ) 1 pm (CT)
- Nov. 21—Veterans Council Leg. Round Table—Rapid City (VFW Post 1273—420 Main Street) 10 am (MT)
- Dec. 1—SDDVA Mini Conference—Rapid City TREA—1981 Centre Street—10:00 am (MT)
- Dec. 2—SDDVA Mini Conference—Pierre—American Legion Post 8 —520 W. Pierre Street (CT)
- Dec. 3—SDDVA Mini Conference—Brookings—American Legion Post 74—1229 Western Avenue (CT)
- Dec. 7 Wreaths Across America Wreath Laying Ceremony—Capitol Lake—Pierre—11:00 am (CT)
- Dec. 8— Governor's Budget Address—Pierre
- 2016
- Jan. 4—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)
- Jan. 12—SD Legislative Session Opens—Pierre
- Jan. 14—Veterans Legislative Breakfast—Pierre
- Jan. 27-28-State Tribal Relations Days—Pierre
- Apr. 4—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)
- April 15-17—DAV Convention—Rapid City
- Jul. 11—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)
- Oct. 3—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)

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